

## CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1 - 26. (canceled)

1           27. (new) An apparatus for filling an array of blisters  
2       of a foil with respective small objects, the apparatus comprising:

3               means for moving the foil with the blisters open upward  
4       past a filling station;

5               an endless transfer belt formed with blisters arrayed  
6       substantially identically to the blisters of the foil;

7               a pair of horizontally spaced drive rollers over which  
8       the transfer belt is spanned, one of the rollers being at the  
9       filling station and the other of the rollers remote therefrom;

10              supply means for depositing objects in bulk onto an upper  
11       stretch of the belt adjacent the other roller and for sorting each  
12       of the objects into a respective one of the blisters of the upper  
13       stretch of the transfer belt;

14              means for rotating the rollers and advancing the upper  
15       stretch of the roller toward the filling station with the objects  
16       in the blisters of the belt; and

17              a placer having a multiplicity of pickers and operable to  
18       pick a multiplicity of respective objects out of the blisters of  
19       the transfer belt and deposit the picked objects simultaneously  
20       into the blisters of the foil.

1           28. (new) The apparatus defined in claim 27 wherein the  
2       pickers are arrayed substantially identically to the blisters of  
3       the transfer belt and of the foil.

1           29. (new) The apparatus defined in claim 27 wherein one  
2       of the rollers is a drive roller and is formed with a multiplicity  
3       of recesses arrayed substantially identically to the blisters of  
4       the transfer belt and receiving the blisters of the transfer belt  
5       as the transfer belt passes around the drive roller.

1           30. (new) The apparatus defined in claim 27 wherein the  
2       transfer belt has a plurality of laterally spaced and transversely  
3       overlapping endless parts each formed with a plurality of the  
4       blisters and each spanned over both of the rollers, whereby the  
5       drive roller with the recesses synchronizes movement of the belt  
6       parts.

1           31. (new) The apparatus defined in claim 29, further  
2       comprising  
3           a servomotor rotating the drive roller.

1           30. (new) The apparatus defined in claim 27, further  
2 comprising  
3                 a collecting tray underneath the upper stretch of the  
4 belt.

1           31. (new) The apparatus defined in claim 27 wherein the  
2 means for sorting includes a flow obstacle closely juxtaposed with  
3 an upper face of the upper stretch between the rollers so as to  
4 scrape off objects not in blisters.

1           32. (new) The apparatus defined in claim 27, further  
2 comprising  
3                 a mobile rack carrying the transfer belt, drive rollers,  
4 supply means, rotating means, and placer.

1           33. (new) The apparatus defined in claim 27 wherein the  
2 blisters of the transfer belt are shallower than the blisters of  
3 the foil.

1           34. (new) The apparatus defined in claim 27, further  
2 comprising  
3                 a swivel plate juxtaposed with the upper reach.

1           35. (new) The apparatus defined in claim 27, further  
2 comprising  
3           a camera and  
4           control means connected between the camera and the placer  
5 for monitoring filling of the blisters of the foil.

1           36. (new) The apparatus defined in claim 27 wherein the  
2 upper reach is angled upward from the other roller toward the one  
3 roller such that objects on the upper reach but not in the blisters  
4 of the upper reach slide away from the filling station.

1           37. (new) The apparatus defined in claim 27 wherein the  
2 transfer belt is formed of an elongated strip formed with blisters  
3 and the blisters at ends of the strip are nested into each other to  
4 make the transfer belt endless.

1           38. (new) The apparatus defined in claim 27 wherein the  
2 transfer belt extends transversely of the foil.

1           39. (new) A method of operating an apparatus to fill an  
2 array of blisters of a foil with respective small objects, the  
3 apparatus having:

4           an endless transfer belt formed with blisters arrayed  
5           substantially identically to the blisters of the  
6           foil;

7           a pair of horizontally spaced drive rollers over which  
8           the transfer belt is spanned, one of the rollers  
9           being at a filling station and the other of the  
10          rollers remote therefrom; and

11          a placer having a multiplicity of pickers,  
12          the method comprising the steps of:

13          displacing the foil with the blisters open upward past  
14          the filling station;

15          rotating the rollers and thereby driving the belt to move  
16          an upper stretch of the belt from the other roller toward the  
17          filling station;

18          depositing the objects in bulk onto the upper stretch of  
19          the belt adjacent the other roller;

20          sorting each of the deposited objects into a respective  
21          one of the blisters of the upper stretch of the transfer belt;

22          picking a multiplicity of the objects out of the blisters  
23          of the transfer belt at the filling station and depositing the  
24          picked objects simultaneously into the blisters of the foil.

1           40. (new) The method defined in claim 39 wherein the  
2 upper stretch of the transfer belt is moved generally perpendicular  
3 to a direction of travel of the foil.

1           41. (new) The method defined in claim 39 wherein the  
2 upper stretch of the belt is moved upward at an acute angle to the  
3 horizontal from the other roller to the one roller.

1           42. (new) The method defined in claim 39 wherein the  
2 objects are sorted into the blisters of the upper stretch by  
3 scraping objects not in blisters off the upper stretch.

1           43. (new) The method defined in claim 39 further  
2 comprising the steps of  
3           detecting a width of the transfer belt and  
4           operating the placer to only pick objects in a field  
5 corresponding to the detected width.